REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1 and 12-32 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended to better define the claimed invention. Claims 2-11 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 12-32 have been added to provide Applicants with the scope of protection to which they are believed entitled. The specification and Abstract have been revised to conform with commonly accepted US patent practice. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

The objection to the specification is believed overcome in view of the above amendments.

The *35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph* rejection of claims 1-11 is either moot or believed overcome in view of the above amendments. Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 and the newly added claims are free of any problems within the meaning of *35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph*, as will be apparent to the Examiner upon reviewing these claims.

The art rejections of claims 1-11 are either moot or believed overcome in view of the above amendments.

In particular, independent claim 1 has been amended to direct to a retaining member for holding and supporting an elongated element from a support, said retaining member comprising a base portion attachable to the support; and a holding portion connected to said base portion and comprising a recess for holding the elongated element therein, said recess comprising: a tubular portion; and a plurality of spaced ribs extending radially inwardly from said tubular portion to have **different radial heights**. None of the applied references fairly teach or suggest the invention of

amended claim 1, because the references all teach ribs of the same radial height. *See*, for example, *Ruckwardt* at FIG. 1, elements 18 and 19; *Ismert* at FIG. 2, elements 25; and *Giangrasso* at FIG. 2A, elements 14, 17. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentable over the applied art of record.

New claims 12-30 depend from claim 1, and are considered patentable at least for the reason advanced with respect to amended claim 1. Claims 12-30 are also patentable on their own merits since these claims recite other features of the invention neither disclosed, taught nor suggested by the applied art.

For example, as to claim 12, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest that **said ribs are elongated in a circumferential direction** of said tubular portion. New claim 12 as well as claims 13-19 depending therefrom find solid support in the original disclosure, especially the paragraph bridging pages 3-4 and the first two paragraphs on page 4 of the specification. None of the applied references fairly teach or suggest the invention of claim 12 because the references all teach ribs that are elongated in the axial direction of the holding recess. *See* all drawings of the applied references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that new independent claim 12 is patentable over the applied art of record.

As to claim 14, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest that said elongated ribs describe **circular or helical curves**. The ribs disclosed by the applied references are all straight. *See* all drawings of the applied references.

As to claim 15, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest that said ribs are disposed at a uniform spacing in an **axial** direction of said tubular portion. The ribs disclosed by the applied references are arranged in a different direction, i.e., the circumferential direction. *See* all drawings of the applied references.

As to claim 18, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest that the ribs that have

a greater radial height also have a smaller width at the top and the width is **smaller** than the radial height. In all drawings of the applied references, the width of the ribs appears to be greater or equal to the respective radial height.

As to claim 20, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest that the first rib having a greater radial height than the second ribs is **spaced from each of the edges of said elongated slot by at least one of said second ribs**. The most pertinent reference appears to be *Ruckwardt* whose rib 19 (FIG. 1) is spaced from each of the edges (18) of the elongated slot (5) by a smooth portion of the recess. There is no second rib of a smaller radial height disposed between rib 19 of *Ruckwardt* and the edges of slot 5.

As to claim 26, note the discussion *supra* with respect to claim 18.

As to claim 28, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest that a top of said first rib describes a **convex** curve and tops of said second ribs describe **concave** curves. In the applied references, the tops of the ribs are either all convex (*Ruckwardt* at FIG. 1 and *Ismert* at FIG. 2) or all flat or concave (*Giangrasso* at FIG. 2A).

As to claim 29, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed further holding portion having a **smooth inner surface free of ribs or teeth**. *See* element 18 in FIG. 1 of the instant application. The most pertinent appears to be *Ruckwardt* which teaches both holding portions (FIG. 1) being provided with ribs.

As to claim 30, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed **resilient contact element** adapted to bear against a surface of the support when said base position is attached to the support, said resilient contact element being made from the same plastic material as said first and second ribs. *See* element 37 in FIG. 6 of the instant application. In the most pertinent references, i.e., *Ruckwardt* and *Ismert*, the body (4 in FIG. 1 of *Ruckwardt* and 16 in FIG. 2 of *Ismert*) which is usually harder than the ribs, is directly brought into contact with the support.

Therefore, the references cannot further isolate vibrations occurring in the supported elongated element from the support. In contrast, the claimed invention requires that a resilient contact element be placed against the support, thereby any vibrations that have not been absorbed by the ribs will be further absorbed by the resilient contact element without being transmitted to the support.

New independent claim 31 is directed to a combination of an elongated element and a retaining member for holding and supporting said elongated element from a support, said retaining member comprising: a base portion attachable to the support; and a holding portion connected to said base portion and comprising a recess holding the elongated element therein, said recess comprising: a tubular portion; and a plurality of spaced ribs extending radially inwardly from said tubular portion, said ribs including at least a first rib having a first radial height and at least a second rib having a second radial height smaller than the first radial height; **wherein said elongated element is resiliently supported in said recess by said first rib to be radially spaced from said second rib and said tubular portion**, said first rib being elastically deformable to allow said elongated element to come to rest on said second rib without allowing said elongated element to contact said tubular portion and said base portion. In other words, independent claim 31 requires that the elongated element be supported by at least a rib of a greater radial height and be spaced from another rib of a smaller radial height. New claim 31 finds solid support in the original disclosure, e.g., page 2, lines 12-14 from bottom, the paragraph bridging pages 2-3, and page 8, the second paragraph.

In all applied references, because the ribs are all of the same radial height, they will all support the elongated element without any of the ribs being spaced from the supported elongated element. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 31 is patentable over the art.

Claim 32 depends from claim 31, and is considered patentable at least for the reason advanced with respect to claim 31. Claim 32 is also patentable on its own merit as discussed with

respect to claim 30.

Each of the Examiner's rejections has been traversed/overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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703-872-9306
FACSIMILE NUMBER